

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5121

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, TU
SUBJECT: TURKISH REQUEST FOR T-38 AIRCRAFT

REF: STATE 172379 (DTG 080025Z JUL 78) (NOTAL)

1. ON JULY 11, CHIEF OF JUSMMAT AIR FORCE SECTION DISCUSSED T-38 PROGRAM WITH DEFENSE MINISTRY PROCUREMENT CHIEF, GENERAL CELIK. CELIK, WHO RETURNED THIS PAST WEEK-END FROM CONSULTATIONS WITH HIS EMBASSY AND USG OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON, WAS FULLY FAMILIAR WITH USG POSITION AS CONVEYED TO AMBASSADOR ESENBEL PER REFTEL. IN ENSUING DISCUSSION, CELIK MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS: (A) THE GOT FULLY UNDERSTANDS THE USG POSITION WITH REGARD TO SUBMISSION OF A SEPARATE PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION (PD) TO CONGRESS AT THIS TIME; (B) THE DEFENSE MINISTRY NEVERTHELESS WILL CONTINUE TO EARMARK \$2.5 MILLION IN FY 78 CREDIT FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF LONG-LEAD TIME ITEMS FOR THE T-38 PROGRAM IN THE HOPE THAT, WHEN THE EMBARGO IS LIFTED BY CONGRESS, IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO TRANSFER PD II FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE; (C) THE GOT UNDERSTANDS THAT, IF SUCH REPREOGRAMMING IS
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POSSIBLE, A PD AND NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS WILL STILL BE REQUIRED, BUT IT IS HOPED THAT SUCH ACTION CAN BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE END OF THE FISCAL YEAR; AND (D) AN FMS ALLOCATION FOR THE T-38 PROGRAM WILL BE SOUGHT IN FY 79 IF THERE IS INSUFFICIENT TIME FOR REPROGRAMMING IN FY 79.

2. EMBOFF COVERED ESSENTIALLY SAME POINTS WITH FOREIGN

MINISTRY DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF NATO AND MULTILATERAL SECURITY AFFAIRS IN CONVERSATION JULY 10. FONMIN OFFICER SAID THAT DEFENSE MINISTRY'S REQUEST FOR REPROGRAMMING OF FY 78 FUNDS FOR T-38'S WAS REFERRED TO AMBASSADOR ESENBEL FOR ACTION BECAUSE OF THE "URGENCY" THAT THE TURKISH AIR FORCE ATTACHES TO THIS PROGRAM. FONMIN OFFICER AGREED, HOWEVER, THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER TO HAVE THIS REQUEST HANDLED IN NORMAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE CHANNELS.

3. COMMENT: IT HAS BEEN APPARENT FOR SOME TIME THAT THE TURKISH AIR FORCE AND DEFENSE MINISTRY HAVE BEEN ANXIOUS TO SECURE A USG COMMITMENT FOR THE T-38 PROGRAM ON AN URGENT BASIS AS INDICATED ABOVE, EVEN IN ADVANCE OF CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON THE ARMS EMBARGO. WE BELIEVE THE DISCUSSIONS REPORTED ABOVE -- AS WELL AS GENERAL CELIK'S CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON -- WILL KEEP THE GOT FROM GETTING OUT IN FRONT AGAIN.
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